

Meeting: Laois Kilkenny Community Forum

Date: 11th June 2024

Venue: Online

Participants:

Irish Rural Link- **James Claffey, Brendan Mulry**

EirGrid- **Avril Wilson, Eoin Brockert**

M-CO- **Coleen Savage**

Laois Kilkenny Community Forum Representatives - **Michael McEvoy, Cllr. Paschal McEvoy, Linda Donnell, Tomas Healy, Juanita Dunphy**

Apologies – **Pat Farrell**

Meeting chaired by Irish Rural Link and draft minutes compiled by Irish Rural Link

Item	Description	
1.	Introduction James Claffey (Chairperson) opened the meeting, facilitated introductions and introduced the agenda.	
2.	Minutes of previous meeting Minutes from the previous meeting (March 12th, 2024) Proposed by Cllr Paschal McEvoy and Seconded by Michael McEvoy	
3.	Project Update from EirGrid EOIN Brockert from EirGrid provided a project update for Quarter 2 2024. Coolnabacky <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 110 kV GIS Building Foundations Complete• Groundworks – Settlement Ponds Complete (landscape)• Installation and finishing of temporary and permanent berms OHL Ballyragget - Coolnabacky Kilkenny: Structures and Stringing (1-48 structures): 100% Complete Fibre Wrap: Started and partially complete Laois – Ballyragget – Coolnabacky Structure: Intermediate Pole sets 25% complete, Angle Towers 25% complete (works ongoing) Stringing – 10% complete (ongoing) Fibre Wrap – Remains to be started	
	Questions/Queries, Comments	Response
	Have all the Laois side land owner issues been resolved?	Good progress has been made in relation to these issues.
	Was the power cut last Saturday in relation to line works?	This was not in relation to the project and could have been part of regular ESB maintenance works.

		A lot of effort goes in to maintaining good relations with affected farmers and landowners with regular ongoing communication and every effort is taken to minimise disruption (eg. construction work scheduled to fit in most appropriately with the planting season)
3.	Community Benefit Fund Update	
	Coleen Savage (M-CO) update on Phase 2 of the Community Benefit Fund. Main points outlined.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The closing date for receipt of applications is Tuesday 18th June. • There was a well-attended information evening with representatives from areas that hadn't previously attended present. • A good number of queries have been addressed and if anybody has any questions do please continue to contact Coleen or Emma in M-CO. • Groups are advised to submit applications early if possible. 	
	Questions/Queries, Comments	Response
	Is there any possibility of an extension of the application timeframe to the end of June?	Unfortunately, this won't be possible as it would be unfair to the groups who have already submitted an application. There will be a third funding call coming later in the project.
4.	Any Other Business	
	James Claffey (chairperson) extended congratulations to Cllr Paschal McEvoy (in attendance) and Cllr Pat Fitzpatrick who was also re-elected. There will discussions held in relation to council representation on the forum going forward. Avril Wilson (EirGrid) and James Claffey would like to express sincere thanks to former Cllr. Thomasina Connell who contributed very significantly to the work of the forum.	
5.	Conclusion & Next Meeting	
	James Claffey (Chairperson) thanked all members for their attendance. The next meeting is scheduled for September 10th.	